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Bromyard Rural District

HEREFORDSHIRE



ANNUAL REPORT

on the

State of the Public Health

For the Year 1947

Staff of the Public Health Department

Medical Officer of Health	...	...	H. F. GREEN, M.A., M.B., D.P.H.
Clerks	...	...	MISS D. M. J. BRAMFITT (resigned on 18th January, 1947) MISS S. DENSHAM (appointed on 17th February, 1947)
Sanitary Inspector and Surveyor	...	J. N. S. HARRISON, M.S.I.A., M.I.E.T.	(Telephone No.: Bromyard 128)

Public Health Office: 4, CHURCH STREET, LEOMINSTER.
Telephone: Leominster 95.

To the Chairman and Members of the Bromyard Rural District Council
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

I have the honour to present my Annual Report for the year 1947, which will also be my last report to you.

The conditions in the hop-yards have improved considerably since 1946; however, the leeway of dilapidations of the war years is not yet made up. Some farms have been improved out of all recognition, but in other farms conditions are not so good as they were in 1938. More consideration should be given to the problem of handling the human element when dealing with hop-pickers and their quarters.

Mr. Kent, our Sanitary Inspector's assistant during hop-picking, was a most useful addition to the staff. I should like to record my appreciation of his excellent work during his short term of office.

The housing problem remains with us and the completion of the survey should enable the Council to take stock of its future requirements. The provision of a fully co-ordinated water scheme will enable the Council to decide more easily on suitable sites.

The occurrence of only five cases of infantile paralysis during the year is satisfactory in view of the widespread and severe nature of the epidemic in the country at large. Of the three cases occurring in hop-pickers' quarters, two were almost certainly infected before they arrived at the camps. The use of D.D.T. and Gammexane in the quarters seems to have been abundantly justified.

The Council should seriously consider in the near future the adequacy of its present public health staff. Your Sanitary Inspector is also Surveyor, and as Surveyor his work is likely to increase rather than diminish as the Council's schemes mature. As Sanitary Inspector, his work is considerably increased during hop-picking. If the increase of Sanitary staff by one appears unjustified, the Council might consider joint arrangements with the Bromyard Urban District Council.

May I record my appreciation of the co-operation and friendliness that I have met both from the Council and the staff during my ten years of office.

H. F. GREEN,
Medical Officer of Health.

SECTION A.—STATISTICS AND SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF THE AREA.

Area (in acres)	61,114
Number of inhabited houses (end of 1947) according to the Rate Books	2,029
Rateable Value	£16,768
Sum represented by a Penny rate	£72 10 1

EXTRACT FROM THE VITAL STATISTICS OF THE YEAR:

LIVE BIRTH RATE (per 1,000 of estimated resident population)	24.3
STILL-BIRTH RATE (per 1,000 Live and Still births)	17.3
DEATH RATE (per 1,000 of estimated resident population)	15.7
INFANTILE MORTALITY RATE (per 1,000 Live births)	58.8
DEATHS FROM PUERPERAL CAUSES: No deaths in 1947 were attributable to puerperal or maternal causes.	

COMPARABLE DATA FOR ENGLAND AND WALES, 1947:

Live Birth Rate	20.5
Death Rate	12.0
Infantile Mortality Rate	41.0

SECTION B.—GENERAL PROVISION OF HEALTH SERVICES FOR THE AREA.

LABORATORY FACILITIES

Laboratory facilities continued to be available at the County Public Health Laboratory, Hereford, which is under the administration of the Medical Research Council.

CLINICS

There are none provided by the Local Authority.

Under the County Council schemes the following Clinic facilities are available to residents in the country districts.

Child Welfare Centre: In Frome Bank, Bromyard, on alternate Thursdays, at 1.30 p.m.

Venereal Diseases: At the County Council Hospital, Hereford, on Wednesdays and Fridays.

The County schemes also provide for Maternity and Child Welfare Clinics, Paediatric, Ear, Nose and Throat, and Eye Clinics. Children are referred to these Clinics as and when required, on the recommendation of the School Medical or Infant Welfare Authority, or at the request of the Medical Practitioner.

I am indebted to Mr. J. N. S. Harrison for the following statement (Sections C to E) furnished under Article 27 (Sub-section 18) of the Sanitary Officers (outside London) Regulations.

SECTION C.—SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE AREA

WATER SUPPLIES

With the exception of the Council Houses at Wolferlow, Pencombe and Stoke Lacy, all piped supplies in the District are privately owned. Repairs have been carried out to Public Wells and Pumps in the parishes of Bringsty, Norton and Linton.

Two Vee notched gauges have been installed at New House Farm, Tedstone Delamere for the gauging of the Whitbourne supply, and at Growland Dingle for the gauging of the Bishops Frome supply.

A few complaints of water shortages were reported during the year, local arrangements were made to temporarily overcome this shortage.

Numerous complaints were received of well and spring water supplies being polluted. To investigate these complaints and supplies generally, 257 visits were made during which 50 samples were taken for analysis, which showed 33 to be polluted.

The Council water scheme for the supply of water to the whole of the Rural District, which was being prepared by Mr. Dumbleton, Water Engineer, has had to be left in abeyance because of the National Economy. The Ministry of Health have agreed to the Whitbourne scheme continuing as a separate scheme and Mr. Dumbleton is preparing the scheme for contract.

DRAINAGE AND SEWAGE

The only sewer vested in the Council is that serving Bishop's Frome. The outfall is an open ditch on the Ledbury Road, which gives rise to constant complaints. The Council have engaged Mr. Dumbleton, Water and Sewage Engineer, who has prepared a scheme for the complete sewerage of the village, together with treatment works and outfall drains.

Complaints concerning the discharge of sewage on to the roadside from a factory in Stoke Lacy has been remedied by the installation of a completely new drainage system and disposal works.

RIVERS AND STREAMS

A complaint was received concerning the pollution of a small stream at the rear of the Council Houses at Pencombe by the sewage from these houses. A new filter tank has been constructed and the septic tank enlarged. No further complaint has been received since the work was done.

REFUSE DISPOSAL

There is no organised refuse collection in the district. A few requests have been received for collection. The Sanitary Inspector advised on suitable arrangements for disposal in each case.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA

INSPECTIONS UNDER				Number	Informal Notices served	Statutory Notices served	Notices complied with
Housing Acts	...	...	...	432	11	5	13
Public Health Acts	...	...	...	29	25	—	21
Cowsheds	...	...	...	76	50	—	51
Factories and Workshops	...	...	...	1	—	—	—
Bakehouses	...	...	...	5	—	—	—
Hop-pickers' Quarters	...	...	...	395	130	—	125
Nuisances (complaints)	...	...	...	161	61	—	61
Water Supplies	...	...	...	257	97	5	74
Infectious diseases	...	...	...	140	—	—	—
Butcher's Shops, etc.	...	...	...	12	—	—	—

FACTORIES AND WORKSHOPS

INSPECTIONS UNDER THE FACTORIES ACT, 1937

Premises	Number on Register	Number of		
		Inspections	Written notices	Occupiers prosecuted
(i) Factories in which Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities	1	1	—	—
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority	1	3	—	—
(iii) Other premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)				
TOTAL	2	4		

Cases in which defects were found:

Particulars	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted
	Referred				
	Found	Remedied	To H.M. Inspector	By H.M. Inspector	
Want of cleanliness (S.1) ..	—	—	—	—	—
Overcrowding (S.2)	—	—	—	—	—
Unreasonable temperature (S.3)	—	—	—	—	—
Inadequate ventilation (S.4)	—	—	—	—	—
Ineffective drainage of floors (S.6)	—	—	—	—	—
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient	—	—	—	—	—
(b) Unsuitable or defective	—	—	—	—	—
(c) Not separate for sexes	—	—	—	—	—
Other offences against the Act, (not including offences relating to outwork)	—	—	—	—	—
TOTAL ...	—	—	—	—	—

CAMPING SITES

Three camping sites in the district are licenced. They are supplied with piped water and bucket chemical closets.

VERMINOUS PREMISES, ETC.

No complaints have been received concerning verminous premises.

HOP-PICKERS' QUARTERS

An increased amount of my time was devoted to the Hop-pickers' accommodation this year. A thorough inspection of all farms housing hop-pickers was possible this year as the Council were able to provide me with temporary assistance during the three months of hop-picking. All premises were visited, fully inspected and the conditions recorded as a result of the 395 visits made and 130 informal notices were served.

The gale damage at the beginning of the year caused widespread damage to the hop-pickers' quarters, but most premises were made usable by the beginning of the season.

Owing to the epidemic of Poliomyelitis, additional precautions were taken by the Council and most farmers, against infectious disease within the camps. The Council agreed for my assistant to spray all latrines and rubbish dumps with D.D.T. and the farmers were advised to treat the premises, etc., with D.D.T. or Gammexane. It is believed that as a result of these precautions, fly infestation was kept at a minimum and no serious outbreak of infectious disease was notified.

Several farmers have increased their hop growing acreage and have provided new hop-pickers' barracks, etc. The most common complaint found at the majority of farms was the lack of provision of refuse bins. Secondly the number of crude latrines gave rise to complaints. The most serious complaint at one farm was one of severe overcrowding, and mixing of sexes in common quarters. The most outstanding improvement was at Leighton Court where new barracks, cook-houses, latrines, etc., were erected and water supply laid on. These premises had previously been seriously criticised by Dr. Brunyate of the Ministry of Health.

Dr. Brunyate in his report to the Council was pleased to note the assistance provided by the Council for their Sanitary Inspector and recommended the continuance of this assistance.

SECTION D.—HOUSING.

The Council own 20 houses as follows: Cricks Green (4), Pencombe (4), Much Cowarne (4), Stoke Lacy (4), Wolferlow (2), Avenbury (2). These include the four Swedish type houses completed at Stoke Lacy during the year. An unfortunate fire burnt out one and damaged the second of a pair of Swedish houses at Pencombe, which were within a month of completion.

New houses erected privately during the year: 8.

INSPECTION OF DWELLING HOUSES DURING THE YEAR

1. (a) Total number of dwelling houses inspected for housing defects under the Public Health and Housing Acts	401
(b) Number of inspections made for the purpose	432
2. Number of dwelling houses found not to be, in all respects, fit for human habitation	401

ACTION UNDER STATUTORY POWERS DURING THE YEAR

Proceedings under the Public Health Acts:

Number of dwelling houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	0
Number of dwelling houses in which defects were remedied after serving of formal notices:	
(a) By owners	0
(b) By Local Authority in default of Owners	0

VAN DWELLINGS

No cases of vans overstaying the statutory period were noted.

SECTION E.—INSPECTION AND SUPERVISION OF FOOD.

MILK

Visits to inspect dairies and cowsheds	76
Number of cowsheds and dairies repaired or improved during the year	12

MEAT AND OTHER FOODS

Butchers' shops and food shops were inspected throughout the district and small quantities of tinned goods, fats and bacon were surrendered by the various shop-keepers as being unfit for human consumption.

SECTION F.—PREVALENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

The occurrence of thirty-three cases of Measles is interesting in that many of the cases occurred during the summer months, thus giving rise to some suspicion of a severe winter epidemic which was subsequently confirmed.

Of the five cases of infantile paralysis, three occurred amongst hop-pickers, and of these, two were almost certainly infected before their arrival at the camp. No deaths occurred.

ANALYSIS OF TOTAL NOTIFIED CASES, ACCORDING TO AGE

DISEASE	AGE OF PATIENT												TOTAL		
	0 — 1	1 — 2	2 — 3	3 — 4	4 — 5	5 — 6	6 — 7	7 — 10	10 — 15	15 — 20	20 — 30	30 — 40	Over 40	Unknown	
Measles ...	2	4	2	3	6	1	1	2	6	3	1	1	1	1	33
Meningitis ...	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	13
Pneumonia ...	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	7	1	6
Whooping Cough	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Ophthalmia	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Neonatorum ...	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Scarlet Fever ...	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2
Anterior Poliomyelitis ...	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	5

DIPHTHERIA IMMUNISATION

The state of immunisation of the child population of the district at the end of 1947 is indicated in the table below:

Under 5 years of age		Between 5 and 15 years of age		Total
Number	Percentage of group	Number	Percentage of group	under 15 Number
217	33.4%	715	68.0%	932

It is gratifying to notice the increase of children under five years of age who are immunised, from 151 in 1945 to 217 in 1947 and that 97 children were immunised during the year.

The co-operation of the District Nurses and Health Visitors has had much influence.

“LOCAL” CHILDREN, aged 0—4 years

	1939	1940	1941	1942	1943	1944	1945	1946	1947	
Number immunised during year	...	1	—	106	85	58	75	29	61	97
Number immunised at any time	...	1	1	107	163	173	192	151	164	217

“Immunised” indicates only those children who have completed a full course of injections.

As from the 5th July, 1948, all immunisation becomes the responsibility of the Herefordshire County Council. The County Medical Officer will in future report annually on the state of immunisation of children.

TUBERCULOSIS

At the end of 1947, the Tuberculosis Register contained the names of twenty males and thirteen females, who normally reside in the Council's district.

During the year, nine new cases were notified, seven on account of Pulmonary Tuberculosis, and two because of the presence of the disease in parts of the body other than the lungs. During the same period, six deaths of persons suffering from the disease occurred and three persons left the district.

CAUSES OF DEATH (all ages)

Disease	Male	Female	Total
Tuberculosis	4	2	6
Influenza	1	—	1
Cancer (all forms)	9	4	13
Diabetes	1	1	2
Intra-cranial vascular lesions	5	2	7
Diseases of the Heart and Arteries ...	26	24	50
Bronchitis, Pneumonia and other respiratory diseases ...	6	2	8
Diseases of the Digestive system ...	3	1	4
Diarrhoea (under two years)	1	—	1
Nephritis	1	2	3
Premature birth	—	1	1
Congenital conditions (at birth) ...	5	1	6
Road Traffic Accidents	2	1	3
All other causes	3	2	5